

you? I sometimes wonder what some men would do, if every time they kissed their wives they had to endure what the poor, long-suffering women do.

So don't smoke, my boy. It makes you stupid, so it does not help you in your studies. It is bad for the heart, so it does not advance you in athletic sports. It makes you nervous, so it doesn't make you a better shot. It makes you smell like a tap-room, so it doesn't make you pleasant company. It doesn't do you one particle of good; it makes you appear silly and ridiculous; it is as disagreeable and offensive to yourself as it is to any body else; you don't get a bit of comfort out of it, and you know it; so don't smoke!—*Golden Rule.*

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, MAY 27, 1893.

A STOLEN BIBLE.

SOME years ago there lived in a peaceful mountain home an Arabian vinedresser. His life was quiet and uneventful. But suddenly war broke out, and he was drafted into the Turkish army, and was forced away from his budding vines and quiet home. The change in his life was bad for him, and before long he had become as rough and as reckless as any of his comrades, the Mussulman soldiers. While the company with which he served was out on one of their foraging expeditions they attacked a small Christian village. The terrified villagers fled; and the soldiers ransacked their houses, seizing all the booty they could carry off. The Arabian soldier was very fond of reading; and he took away several books, choosing them haphazard, regardless of their contents.

One of the books thus carried off proved to be a Bible. He scarcely glanced at its contents till the war was over; but as soon as he was allowed to return home, and he was away from the excitement of camp life, he began to read the stolen Bible. Then he determined to read it carefully. As he read, his attention and interest grew, and soon he said to himself, "This book is far better than the Koran," and he was filled with wonder at its contents. Then he began to wonder at himself; for in the study of his word God revealed himself to the young soldier, and in its light the poor man saw the sinfulness of his own heart and life. He had no human teacher; but he earnestly studied and searched God's word. It taught him to pray, and to whom to pray. It taught him his sinfulness, and pointed him to the Saviour. He came to the Redeemer of whom he read, and was soon rejoicing in him as his own Saviour and Friend. His family and friends were most indignant when they found that he had "turned Christian," and persecuted and insulted him as much as they could. They mobbed him in the streets; they destroyed his carefully-kept fruit trees.

But nothing could shake his faith and his love to God. An English minister heard of his distress, and gave him employment. More and more precious did the Bible become to the persecuted Arabian vinedresser. Prayerfully he studied it; and rapidly did he "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Three years afterward he was happily settled as a Christian teacher and preacher, in a Syrian village on Mount Lebanon; and among the converts there under his charge were some who had been his bitterest enemies and persecutors when first he began to serve the Lord.

This is just one proof that "the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

A SALOON INCIDENT.

THERE was the sound of the chink, chink of glasses, ribald laughter and cursing, while the atmosphere was thick with the fumes of tobacco and alcohol. The hour was near midnight, and the eyes of the men sitting around the little tables drinking and playing cards were heavy and bloodshot. The round, red face of the bartender was flushed with beer and exertion: for his patrons were drinking heavily and often. Presently there was a lull in the business, and the barkeeper improved the opportunity by leaning forward and resting both elbows upon the counter in front of him.

For some time a shabbily-dressed old man, standing near the door and leaning against the soiled wall of the room, had been watching the dealing out of the liquor with feverish, blood-shot eyes. His face was pale and thin almost to emaciation, and his gray hair and beard were long and unkempt. The thread-bare black coat, which clung loosely about his attenuated frame, was buttoned up tightly around his throat and down his breast. As he stood there, his long, thin hands would clasp and unclasp themselves nervously, while every now and then a tremour would pass over his frame. When the barkeeper leaned his fat arms upon the counter, the old man gave a quick, nervous glance around the room, and walking up to him asked, in a husky voice, for a glass of whiskey.

The bartender looked at him contemptuously for a moment, and then inquired: "Have you got the chink?"

"Certainly, certainly; of course I have. I'm no deadbeat," replied the old man.

The saloonkeeper handed him a glass of the fiery beverage, and he drank it down at a swallow.

As he put the empty glass down upon the counter, he turned to the man behind the bar and said: "Say, old fellow, I have poured a large fortune, a beautiful home and a loved wife and child into your till, and you have poured ruination down my throat; so I guess you can stand this one drink, for I have not a cent left in the world," and he turned to go.

"Not so fast," cried the enraged saloonkeeper, as he sprang over the bar and seized him by the collar. "You drunken old brute, pay for that glass of whiskey, or I'll kick your old carcass into the gutter."

The old man's voice trembled as he replied: "Don't, don't, old friend. For you I have lost a fortune, home, wife and baby; surely you will not begrudge me a single glass of whiskey? I had to have it or I would have died."

"Out upon you, you snivelling old hypocrite," yelled the saloonkeeper, with an oath, emphasizing his command with a brutal kick and a violent jerk on the coat collar.

The collar gave way, and the greedy eyes saw a thin gold chain to which was fastened a small gold locket, hanging around the bare, wrinkled neck.

"Ha, ha! you old miser," laughed the brute, as he tore the chain violently from off the old man's neck. "I'll keep this little trinket till you pay for the whiskey."

For a moment the old man stood as if dazed, and then, clutching wildly with both hands at his throat in a vain search for the locket, cried out: "For God's sake give me back my locket! Give me back my

locket! Don't open it!" he yelled as the saloonkeeper began to examine the locket. "Give it to me! For the love of heaven give it to me."

"You blubbering old idiot," laughed the saloonkeeper, "who'd have thought you'd have a sweetheart at your time of life? Come, boys, let us see what kind of a looking gal she is."

Then the lookers-on saw a strange sight. The gray-headed old man flung himself on his knees before the brutal saloonkeeper, and while the tears ran down his hollow cheeks, begged and implored him to give him back the locket.

But the saloonkeeper only laughed and said: "Must be a pretty girl to make all that fuss over. I wouldn't miss seeing her picture now to save my soul from purgatory." As he said this he opened the locket. A long curl of beautiful golden hair fell out, and, catching on his fingers, twined itself around them like a thing of life. "Saints and angels!" he yelled, as he hurled the locket, hair and all, upon the floor, and began to stamp upon them.

Like a tigress fighting for her young, the old man sprang to the rescue of the golden curl. A short but terrible struggle ensued, and then there was a gleam of glittering steel, a thud, and the gray head fell backward to the floor, while the red blood spurted up in the face of the murderer.

Strong hands seized the saloonkeeper; but the old man was beyond help.

"Oh, my darling, my darling!" he murmured, as his life-blood ebbed away, "who would have thought, when you put your soft white arms around my neck to clasp that locket, kissing me as you did so, and saying in your sweet baby voice: 'Papa, I love 'oo, I love 'oo so. Won't 'oo tise me 'cause I gives 'oo such a sweet birthday's present?'—who would have thought that I should die a drunkard's death, stabbed in a drunken quarrel over a lock of my dead baby's golden hair? Forgive me! Oh, forgive me! my murdered wife and child!" And then raising himself on one elbow, he almost shrieked, while his face took on a look of more than mortal anguish: "May God curse and blast whiskey and all who deal in it, as whiskey has cursed and blasted me and mine!"—and he fell back a corpse.—*Alvin Jovencil, in Union.*

COULDN'T GET THE GATE OPEN.

MORE than sixty years ago, a boy, ten or twelve years old, started one morning to go to school. He didn't like his teacher, and did not like to go to school. He wanted to stay at home, but he knew he could not do that because he was not sick, and had no excuse. But he thought he could invent one that would answer.

His mother started him off with his dinner-pail in his hand, and thought, of course, her little boy would go straight to school, as he often had done before. But after he had been gone fifteen or twenty minutes the little fellow came back.

Was he sick? No. Had he been hurt? No. Did anybody or anything frighten him? No. What then?

Well, he told his mother, "he couldn't get the gate open."

His mother knew this was a poor excuse. She knew he could very easily climb over the gate if it was fast, and that her little boy was only shamming.

What do you think she did? Let him stay at home? Go and open the gate for him? No. She just went towards the wood-pile, and picked up a little switch, and then, turning to the boy, said:

"Come on, I will help you to get the gate open."

Her son took the hint and was off as nimble as a cat, not caring for gates or fences either.

This boy lived to be nearly eighty years of age. He died on the day before last Christmas.

During his long life he found many gates to be opened—as we all do—and that a lively switch will help not only over gates, but over wide ditches, steep hills, and high mountains.

After many years the gray-haired man came to the last gate. It opened of itself and led into the graveyard, where he now sleeps.

That last gate is before us all. It may be just a little way off, or it may be a long

journey. No matter, it is surely ahead somewhere, and we will come to it sooner or later. When we reach it, may it not only lead into the graveyard, but beyond it into the brighter world where gray hairs and trembling limbs are never seen.—*Exchange.*

"Boys Will Be Boys."

"Boys will be boys." We resent the old saying

Current with men; Let it be heard, in excuse for our straying. Never again!

Ours is a hope that is higher and clearer, Ours is a purpose far brighter and dearer, Ours is a name that should silence the jeerer;

We will be men!

"Boys will boys" is an unworthy slander: Boys will be men!

The spirit of Philip in young Alexander Kindles again.

As the years of our youth fly swiftly away, As brightens about us the light of life's day, As the glory of manhood dawns on us we say,

We will be men!

When "boys will be boys" you exclaim with a wink,

Answer us, men! How old are those "boys?" Is their age do you think,

Fifty or ten? It may be the boys with whom you used to go

Considered wild oats not unpleasant to sow; But how looks the harvest you hoped would not grow,

Now you are men? "Boys will be boys!" Yes, if boys may be pure,

Models for men; If their thoughts may be modest, their truthfulness sure,

Say it again! If boys will be boys such as boys ought to be—

Boys full of sweet-minded, light-hearted glee—

Let boys be boys, brave, loving and free, Till they are men!

A Modern Prodigal.

BY

Mrs. Julia McNair Wright.

CHAPTER III.

CONCERNING THE WRATH OF ACHILLES.

THE next morning, drawn by the command of the good Quaker as by an irresistible destiny, Achilles appeared at the house of Friend Amos Lowell at the appointed time. Achilles in his attic had risen early, washed carefully, dressed in his new clothes, and, carrying his shoes and stockings in his hand, had left the house unknown to any one and walked down the mountain, the three miles to the village. He put on his shoes and hose as he waited for Amos to come out.

The day was just breaking as they reached the station, where only one or two passengers besides the sheriff and his prisoner were waiting for the cars. Friend Amos approached Thomas Stanhope, and held out his hand.

"Thy words yesterday, Thomas, gave me hope for thee. When a man sees his errors and confesses that his punishment is just, when he begins to take care for others, a good work is going on in his soul. I have come to tell thee that Mercy and her children shall not lack a friend and a helper while Amos Lowell is spared by the good Lord."

Achilles meanwhile was gazing on his father from behind the shadow of the portly Amos. Here was a new father. His clothes were clean and well mended. He was washed and closely shaven. The fiery glow of alcohol had faded from his eyes and skin, and his features, thinned little by abstinence and anxiety, had returned to something of their natural refinement. Prisoner as he was, he held himself more erect and had a firmer glance than when he shambled along half-drunken the crouching bondsman of alcohol.

"Friend Lowell," he said, "I despair of what I have got, and I ask nothing for